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The Hindu
Yogi-System

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Professor James A. Montgomery

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C.R.L.

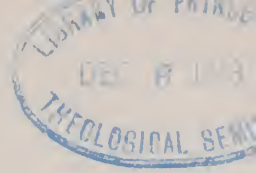
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THE HINDU YOGA-SYSTEM

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Frederic Palmer's account of Angelus Silesius, published in the April number of this *Review*, portrays admirably the struggles of a German mystic of some three hundred years ago, to attain the unattainable, to give utterance to the unutterable. Three and twenty hundred years ago, the like struggles were making part of the spiritual history of distant India. Perhaps Dr. Palmer's essay may lend a certain timeliness to an endeavor to interest Occidental readers in those sombre followers of the Mystic Way, who — time out of mind — have held retreat for meditation in the solemn stillness of the forests "lapped by the storied Hydaspes."

Our histories of philosophy are wont to begin with Thales of Miletus. But oh, how brief seems all recorded human history, when some geologist tells us the story of the earth's crust, or the astronomer overwhelms us with that of the spiral nebulae! Lilliputian indeed is the difference — whether in time or in place — between Thales and Yājñavalkya, between Miletus and the Ganges. The informing fact remains, that these ultimate questions — answerable only in the language of the great antinomies — do and always will come up,

as far to the West and as far to the East as the blades of grass do spring.

Whom space nor time nor nothing else can bound,
 Who hast nor form (save spirit mere) nor end,
 Whom naught can fathom but Thy thought profound,—
 To Thee, Light, Peace Ineffable, I bend.

Thus Bhartri-hari, calling unto God. It is He — of whom they say “Not, not.”

And if timeliness there be, the attempt is none the less timely, because of the work, recently published by the Harvard Press, and written by my friend and colleague and former pupil, James Haughton Woods (now serving at the Sorbonne as exchange-professor from Harvard), and entitled *The Yoga-system of Patanjali*. It is fitting that the work should be introduced, not only to Indianists, but also and especially to students of the history of psychology and philosophy and religion, by *The Harvard Theological Review*.

The volume, as appears from its title-page, comprises three distinct literary works, translated from Sanskrit into English, namely: the Mnemonic Rules, called Yoga-sūtras, of Patanjali; the Comment, called Yoga-bhāshya, attributed to Veda-vyāsa; and the Explanation, called Tattva-vāiçaradī, of Vāchaspati Miçra. It is here in place to point out some of the reasons why these works are worthy of study and some of the ways in which that study may prove interesting and fruitful. But first a word as to what the three works are.

The third, or the Explanation, is of course a commentary on the second, or the Comment. And the Comment is in a way a commentary on the Rules; but it is much more than that, as will appear when we consider what the Rules themselves are. Professor Woods has done well in rendering the Sanskrit word for sūtras by ‘mnemonic rules,’ for that phrase emphasizes the fact that they are primarily, not something that will

give you a clear idea of the Yoga-system, but rather “something to be learned by heart,” a set of mental pegs on which to hang, in very close and orderly sequence, the principles and precepts of a thoroughly elaborated system,—which system, however, you must know from other sources than the rules themselves, namely, from the teachers of your “school.”

While therefore it is important to understand that the Comment is a posterius to the Rules and that the Rules are a prius to the Comment, it is yet more important to understand that the Rules themselves are a posterius to an elaborated system, of which prior system however no exposition in literary form contemporaneous with that prior system has come down to us in Sanskrit; and that the Comment or Bhāshya, the reinvestiture of the skeleton of the Rules with the flesh and blood of comprehensible details, is accordingly the oldest systematic exposition of Yoga doctrine in Sanskrit that we possess.

Onesikritos, the companion of Alexander the Great, is the first notable foreigner to give us an account of the Yogins of India.¹ Himself a disciple of Diogenes the Cynic, we need not wonder that Alexander selected him as the man most fit to talk with the Hindu ascetic sages and to inquire about their teachings. His report of that memorable interview of 326 B.C. has been preserved for us by Strabo in his Geography (xv.63). Despite the difficulty of conversing through interpreters, Onesikritos was in fact remarkably successful in getting

¹ Possibly Demokritos of Abdera visited them, perhaps a century earlier. According to Clement of Alexandria (Stromata, I.xv.69), Demokritos maintained that none of his contemporaries had seen more countries and made the acquaintance of more men distinguished in every kind of science than himself. Among those men, Aelian includes the sages of India (τοὺς σοφιστὰς τῶν Ἰνδῶν: Varia historia, iv.20); and Diogenes Laertius reports a similar tradition (τοῖς γυμνοσοφισταῖς φασὶ τίνας συμμῆσαι αὐτὸν ἐν Ἰνδίᾳ: ix.35). Such a tradition is not to be set aside too lightly, when we consider the views of Demokritos concerning peace of mind (εὐθυμία: ix.45) as the best fruit of philosophy, and the many references thereto in the fragments of his ethical treatises. Had these last been preserved, it is possible that we might have found in them distinctly recognizable traces of Indian teaching.

at some of the very fundamentals of Indian belief. The drift of the talk, he said, came to this, that that is the best doctrine, which rids the spirit not only of grief but also of joy; and again, that that dwelling-place is the best, for which the scantiest equipment or outfit is needed.²

Of these two points, one is of prime significance for the spiritual side of Yoga, just as the other is so for its practical aspects. The one suggests the 'undisturbed calm' (*citta-prasāda*) of Patanjali, the 'mindfulness made perfect through balance' (*upekkhā-sati-pārisuddhi*) of Buddhaghosa; and the other is a concrete instance of the doctrine³ of emancipation from the slavery to things. This latter is a part of the fundamental morality (specifically, neither Brahmanical nor Jainistic nor Buddhist) which is an essential preliminary for any system of ascetic religious training, and is accordingly taught again and again, now with a touch of gentle humor, now sternly, and always cogently, by Brahmans and Jains and Buddhists alike.

Contemporary with Onesikritos, but destined (unlike him) never to be forgotten in India, was Kāuṭilya, "the Hindu Bismarck," as Jacobi calls him, imperial chancellor of Chandragupta or Σανδρόκοττος. His treatise on Statesmanship⁴ is, as Jacobi shows, our most trust-

² Strabo xv.65: τὰ γούν λεχθέντα εἰς τοῦτ' ἔφη συντείνειν ὡς εἶη λόγος ἄριστος δὲ ἡδονὴν καὶ λύπην ψυχῆς ἀφαιρήσεται. . . . καὶ γὰρ οἰκίαν ἀρίστην εἶναι ἥτις ἂν ἐπισκευῆς ἐλαχίστης δέηται.

³ This is beautifully set forth by Buddhaghosa in his great treatise on Buddhism, *The Way of Salvation* or *Visuddhi-magga*. See book 1, sections 105-112, especially 106, in volume 49 of the Proceedings of the American Academy, p. 159. Of all names in the history of Buddhist Scholasticism, Buddhaghosa's is the most illustrious. He is not less renowned in the East than is his contemporary, Saint Augustin, in the West, and for the same reasons,—sanctity of life, wide learning, and great literary achievement. An edition of the Pāli text of this treatise was undertaken by my beloved and forgotten friend and pupil, the late Henry Clarke Warren. It is my hope to complete his unfinished work, and to issue the text with an English version.

⁴ The recently edited *Arthaśāstra*, published at Mysore, 1909. See the articles by Hillebrandt, Hertel, Jacobi, and Jolly, and especially the three articles by Jacobi, *Berliner Akademie*, 1911 and 1912. He calls it "eine historische Quelle allerersten Ranges" (1911, p. 954: cf. p. 957, and 1912, p. 834).

worthy source of knowledge for the ancient Hindu state, not only because its date (about 300 B.C.) is certain,⁵ but also because it was written by the very man who had the principal part in the foundation and administration of the great and growing empire of the Mauryan Dynasty.⁵ Kāuṭilya says that Sāṅkhya and Yoga and Lokāyata were the three philosophic systems current in his day. Unfortunately, he does not tell us whether there were expositions thereof in literary form. In the centuries (perhaps six or more) between Kāuṭilya and Patanjali, the Yoga-system did probably undergo many modifications in detail; but it is a fact of prime importance that so great an authority as Kāuṭilya recognizes it as a system, and as one of the three most worthy of mention among those current in his day.^{5a}

The elements of Yoga, as Hopkins⁶ observes, are indefinitely antique. The rigorous austerities, the control of the senses, especially as against the temptations of carnal lust,—these are the achievements of holy men which made even the gods to tremble on their thrones. And they are described in the Mahā-bhārata and other narrative works, often with amusingly grotesque exaggeration, but in such an incidental and matter-of-fact way that we cannot doubt that from very early times Yoga-practices were common and wide-spread in India and that the belief in their potency was altogether genuine.

Yoga is accordingly one of the most ancient and striking products of the Hindu mind and character. It is therefore a little strange that, while the labors of Deussen and Garbe and others have done very much to open up the Vedānta and Sāṅkhya systems to the Occident, the

⁵ Berliner Akademie, 1911, p. 954.

^{5a} Ibidem, p. 733.

⁶ In his learned article, Yoga-technique in the Great Epic, *Journal of the Am. Oriental Society* (1901), vol. 22, p. 333-379. To him, my most grateful acknowledgments.

history of Yoga as a body of practices and as a religio-philosophic system is yet to be written.⁷ For the history of Yoga-practice, nothing could be more illuminating and fruitful than to carry further such investigations as those of Hopkins, just cited. For the history of Yoga as a system, the most immediate requirement is evidently an Occidental translation of the Comment or Yoga-bhāshya. It is greatly to the credit of Professor Woods that he realized this need and addressed himself with so much energy to the task of supplying it, the more so when that task involved journeys once and again not only to the great teachers of Europe (Deussen and Jacobi), but also to those of India.

Rājendra-lāla Mitra, in the preface to his *Yoga aphorisms of Patanjali* (1883: p. xc), says: "I had hopes of reading the work with the assistance of a professional Yogī; but I have been disappointed. I could find no Pandit in Bengal who had made Yoga the special subject of his study, and the only person I met at Benares who could help me was most exorbitant in his demands. He cared not for the world and its wealth, and the only condition under which he would teach me was strict pupilage under Hindu rules — living in his hut and ever following his footsteps — to which I could not submit." That was five and thirty years ago. A real command of both Sanskrit and English by the same person is a combination rare enough. Still rarer, the combination of those two elements with a knowledge of one of the great vernaculars of India, such as R. Mitra had. Rarest of all, this triple combination plus the chance (which a foreigner is not likely to get) for a thorough acquaintance with the actual procedure and habit of mind of a genuine Yogin of high character. What fruit might that now perhaps almost impossible combination have borne!

⁷This, with all due deference to Garbe and his excellent chapters on Yoga in the *Grundriss der Indoarischen Philologie* (1896).

If no Occidental may hope for any such chances of practical acquaintance with Yoga, it is at least needful that the written treatise which serves as the basis of book-study should be informed by the noblest spirit and loftiest purpose. That the Comment or Bhāshya meets these requirements,⁸ none of us, however much or little we sympathize with the Hindu point of view, will, I think, deny. "Find me, and turn thy back on heaven," says Brahma, in Emerson's familiar verses. And so the author of the Comment, in treating (at ii.42) of the supremest happiness, says⁹ that the pleasures of love in this world and the great pleasures of heaven are not worth the sixteenth part of that supremest happiness that comes from the dwindling of lusts.

And again, in like spirit, he speaks at iii.51. First he quaintly describes how the gods tempt an advanced Yogin with the sensual pleasures of their transitory heaven: "Sir, will you sit here? Will you rest here? This pleasure might prove attractive. This maiden might prove attractive. This elixir wards off old age and death." And so on. Then he suggests the Yogin's answer to these enticements, and in so doing he rises to a pitch of sustained and noble eloquence:

Baked on the pitiless coals of the round-of-rebirths, wandering about in the blinding gloom of birth and death,—hardly have I found the lamp that dispels the darkness of the moral defilements, the lamp of Yoga,—when, lo, these lust-born gusts of the things of sense do threaten to put it out! How then could it be that I who have seen its light, tricked by the mirage of the things of sense, should throw myself like fuel into that same fire of the round-of-rebirths as it flares up again? Fare ye well, [things of sense,] like unto dreams are ye! to be pitied are they that crave you, things of sense, [fare well!]

⁸ It is certain that the Gheraṇḍa-saṅhitā, more or less widely known in the Occident, does not meet them. My former pupil, Professor S. K. Belvalkar of Poona, India, assures me that it is condemned by those whose learning and character he respects. The like is true of Haṭhayoga-pradīpikā and numerous similar works.

⁹ Quoting from the Mahā-bhārata, xii.174.46, a stanza of significance and dignity.

Perhaps enough (or more) has already been said to make clear the historical importance and the moral dignity of the Yoga-bhāshya. Its importance was long ago pointed out by others in other connections: so by Kern in his *History of Buddhism*,¹⁰ by Jacobi in his *Ursprung des Buddhismus aus dem Sāṅkhya-Yoga*,¹¹ and by Senart in his *Bouddhisme et Yoga*;¹² but the appearance of the present translation justifies us in emphasizing the dignity and importance of the original, the more so as it is hoped that this translation of Dr. Woods and the publication of Buddhaghosa's treatise on Buddhism will prove to be a powerful stimulus and aid to the comparative study of these two great systems.

Thus, to instance some of the more striking and well-known coincidences between the Bhāshya and Buddhism, we may begin with the Four Eminent Truths. The most significant achievement of modern medicine is the finding out of the cause of disease. This is the indispensable foundation for the whole structure of preventive medicine. It was precisely this problem in the world of the spirit to which Buddha addressed himself, the ætiology of human misery. His solution he publicly announced in his first sermon, the gist of which was destined to become known to untold millions, the sermon of the Deer-park at Benares¹³ or sermon about the Four Truths. These concern suffering, its cause, its surcease, and the way thereto, and they coincide with the four cardinal topics of Hindu medical science,¹⁴ disease, the cause of disease, health, and remedies. Now these Four Truths

¹⁰ Jacobi's translation, Leipzig, 1882, vol. 1, p. 467 ff.

¹¹ Göttinger Nachrichten, 1896.

¹² Revue de l'histoire des religions, 1900.

¹³ Vinaya-piṭaka, vol. 1, p. 10; Samyutta-nikāya, vol. 5, p. 420. These Truths become a kind of canonical commonplace: see Majjhima, vol. 1, p. 48.

¹⁴ This coincidence the Hindu medical writers did not fail to observe: so Vāgbhaṭa in the stanza introductory to the Aṣṭāṅga-hṛdaya.

are set forth by the author of the Bhāshya at ii.15, and not without explicit reference to the fact that this Yoga-system has four divisions coincident with those of the system of medicine. It may be added that a part of the Rule to which this is the Comment, reads: To the discriminating, all is nothing but pain, *duḥkham eva sarvaṃ vivekinaḥ*; and that this again is one of the three fundamental axioms of Buddhism,¹⁵ All is transitory, All is pain, All is without substantive reality.

Again, the Bhāshya enumerates (at i.20), quite as a matter-of-course, the five means to the higher concentration, namely faith and energy and mindfulness and concentration and insight (*ṣraddhā-vīrya-smṛti-samādhi-prajñā*). These are the same five elements of Yoga mastered and taught by the famous Yoga-doctors, Ālāra Kālāma and Uddaka Rāmaputta, and coincide literally with those given in the Buddhist texts, namely in the Discourse of the Noble Quest or Ariya-pariyesana-sutta, *Majjhima-nikāya*, vol. 1, p. 164. Here Buddha tells how he, before his Enlightenment, went to these teachers, found that he himself had mastered *saddhā*, *virīya*, *sati*, *samādhi*, and *paññā* no less truly than they, and admitted that these things were good as far as they went, but that they brought you only to the third or fourth of the Four Formless Realms, that is, that they did not bring you far enough. The discussion of the proper balance of these five moral faculties constitutes a most interesting section of the fourth book of the *Vi-suddhi-magga*.

Again, among the Forty Businesses or *kammaṭṭhānas*, that play so prominent a rôle in the *Visuddhi-magga*, are the Four Exalted States or *brahma-vihāras*, namely friendliness and compassion and joy and indifference

¹⁵ *Anguttara-nikāya*, vol. 1, p. 286; translated by Henry C. Warren, p. xiv of his *Buddhism in translations*, Harvard Oriental Series, vol. 3. See also *Visuddhi-magga*, book xx.

(mettā, karuṇā, muditā, upekkhā). The whole of book ix is devoted to them. They all lead up to the first three trances, and the cultivation of upekkhā leads even to the fourth trance or highest of the ordinary trances. Now all these four states, under the corresponding names of māitrī, karuṇā, muditā, and upekṣā, are prescribed by the Rule and the Bhāshya at i.33, and as a means for calming the mind-stuff.

Or again, to cite a case of partial correspondence and partial diversity, we may mention the kleṣas or innate defects of human nature or moral defilements or (as Dr. Woods calls them) the hindrances. These are enumerated by the Bhāshya, at ii.3, as ignorance, the feeling-of-personality, lust, ill-will, and the will-to-live (avidyā, asmitā, rāga, dveṣa, abhiniveṣa). But Buddhaghosa, in book xxii, has a list of ten, containing most of these five, and also, for example, sloth or languor (thīna, styāna), which last by the Bhāshya, at i.30, is put among the nine obstacles or antarāyas. We hope that the Bhāshya and the Visuddhi-magga may prove mutually illuminating, by reason not only of their coincidences but also of their differences.

Minor coincidences, in matters of diction, as between the Bhāshya and the Buddhist texts, deserve careful notice from any who chance to study these sources at the same time. Confident as we may be concerning the influence of the Yoga system upon Buddha,—the interplay of influences as between the Bhāshya and the Buddhist texts may well have been chiefly in the opposite direction. Thus the use of the Sanskrit word adhvānam in the sense of 'time' (so at iv.12) is, unless I err, wholly foreign to Brahmanical Sanskrit texts, and is a downright taking over of its Pāli equivalent addhānam in its secondary but common meaning of 'time.' Similarly the use of -nimna with -prāgbhāra (at iv.26) seems to me not rightly Sanskrit at all, but rather a conscious adapta-

tion of the familiar Pāli combination -ninna, -poṇa, -pabbhāra.

Indeed, one is sometimes tempted to surmise that the diction of the author of the Bhāshya was influenced by downright reminiscences of Nikāya texts. Thus at ii.39 and iv.25 are given the questionings or doubts as to personal identity through various past and future births: "Who was I? Or who shall we become?" and so forth: ko 'ham āsam? katham aham āsam? . . . ke vā bhaviṣyāmaḥ? katham vā bhaviṣyāmaḥ? These are substantially the questions cited at length by Buddhaghosa (in book xix) from the Majjhima-nikāya (vol. 1, p. 8).

The reflections of the Yogin "on whom insight has dawned" are put by the author of the Bhāshya (at i.16) in a way which — at once brief and yet ample — is marked by noble dignity. They describe the winning of the supreme goal: "Won is that which was to be won. Ended are the moral defilements which had to be ended. Cut is the close-jointed succession of existences-in-the-world, which — so long as it was not cut asunder — involved death after birth and birth after death." Prāptaṁ prāpaṇīyam. Kṣiṇāḥ kṣetavyāḥ kleṣāḥ. Chinnaḥ ḥṣiṭaparvā bhava-saṁkramo, yasyāvicchedāj janitvā mriyate mṛtvā ca jāyate.

In like manner the consummation of the holy life, salvation or the setting free, is described in the Dīghanikāya, vol. 1, p. 84: "In him, when set free, there arises the knowledge that he *is* set free. He knows: Ended is rebirth. Lived has been the holy life. Done has been what was to be done. There is no more returning here." Vimuttasmim 'vimuttam' iti nāṇaṁ hoti. 'Khīṇā jāti. Vusitaṁ brahmacariyaṁ. Kataṁ karaṇīyaṁ. Nāparaṁ itthattāyā' ti pajānāti.

The whole spiritual situation in both cases is similar; and that the substantial coincidences of the two descrip-

tions may be nothing more than the natural outcome of that similarity we will not deny. But the examples that have been mentioned (a few out of many) make it clear that a systematic study of the Bhāshya in the light of the Buddhist texts is well worth the while.

The comparison of Yoga and Buddhism is not the only study which I hope this work of Professor Woods will powerfully stimulate. I hope it will direct the attention of scholars to a severely critical examination of the supernatural powers which, as Buddhist and Yoga texts alike maintain, are among the fruits of the cultivation of profound concentration or samādhi.

In order to make my meaning clear, let me instance (with added references to the text of the Bhāshya) some of these powers: Such are clairvoyance and clairaudience (ii.43); knowledge of the future (iii.16) and of one's previous births (iii.18); thought-reading (iii.19); power to become invisible (iii.21); the cessation of hunger and thirst (iii.30); the power of hypnotic suggestion (iii.38: "your mind-stuff enters the body of another," *cittasya para-ṣarīrāveṣaḥ*); the power to walk upon water or a spider's thread or sunbeams or to pass through the air (iii.42); the power by reason of which "the fire, hot as it is, burns you not" (iii.45); and so on. Such powers are systematically treated by Buddhaghosa in books xii and xiii, and are constantly mentioned with quiet gravity by the story-tellers, as if no one were expected to have any difficulty in believing them. Is it not worth while, in the light of modern knowledge, to try to draw a line between that which has some real basis in fact and that which has none? To this question William James, by word and by deed, answered with an emphatic Yes.

The more obvious manifestations of Yoga-practice, such as the standing upon one leg or the holding of one

arm aloft and other austerities, did not fail to strike the Greeks (Strabo xv.61), just as, at all times, the sensational has struck the casual¹⁶ observer. The noblest and most spiritual achievements of the Yogin present no features of interest for the gazer or for the tourist-photographer. On the other hand, the rewards — whether of gratified vanity or of reputation or of gifts — for the successful performance of marvellous or apparently supernormal acts, are and always have been a temptation to abuse Yoga-practices with venal and fraudulent purpose. The ample admixture of deception and trick and miracle-mongering has tended to make men of science averse to any serious consideration of the whole subject. But fraud, even if preponderant, will not excuse us from the due investigation of the residuum of well-attested fact, not even if that residuum be small. The reason why well-attested cases of the apparently miraculous are relatively few is a legitimate one: to persons most likely to make the highest and noblest attainments by the practice of Yoga, the so-called “magical powers” are after all an incidental by-product. And accordingly, Buddhaghosa relegates the discussion of the supernormal powers to those books (xii and xiii) which form a mere appendix to his treatment (books iii to xi) of Concentration or Samādhi. To seek these powers as an end, or to make a display of them to satisfy the curiosity of the vulgar, is wholly unworthy, and indeed most strictly forbidden. In the gospel-narrative of the temptation, when the Devil says, “If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence,” the answer of Jesus is an uncompromising rebuke. And in like spirit, the Mahā-

¹⁶ Or, to speak in terms of the twentieth century, the “cameral” or “snapshot” observer. The National Geographic Society of Washington devoted most of its Magazine for December, 1913, to the “Religious penances and punishments self-inflicted by the Holy Men of India.” The paper is illustrated with seventy pictures. The sensational aspects of Yoga-practice have been treated in easily accessible works. Such are John C. Oman’s *The Mystics, Ascetics, and Saints of India*, London, 1903; Richard Schmidt’s *Fakire und Fakirtum*, Berlin, 1908.

bhārata threatens with "a hell from which there is no release" the Yogins who are thus guilty.¹⁷

Thought-reading is a power very often ascribed to Buddha or to a saint, who thereby intuitively discerns the evil intentions of another and so thwarts them. In many of these cases the use of good judgment or of a knowledge of human nature may explain the successful thought-reading; while in others some influence much more subtle may be in play. The cases as a class are not easy to sift. On the other hand, the activity of the subliminal consciousness is most clearly referred to in the Explanation to the Bhāshya at i.24: "Chāitra thinks intently, 'Tomorrow I must get up just at day-break,' and then after having slept, he gets up at that very time because of the subliminal impression resulting from that intent thinking." This power of awaking from sound slumber at a predetermined hour is abundantly attested by common experience, and also, for example, by J. M. Bramwell in his *Hypnotism*, page 387 (cf. p. 115). And doubtless the power to "emerge from trance" or "rise out of trance" (one of the five "masteries" of Buddhaghosa at book iv, section 103, the *vuṭṭhāna-vasī*) is a power of a kindred nature. If the Bhāshya's promise, "fire burns him not" (at iii.45: see above) refers to insensibility to the pain of a burn, the power therein implied may stand in relation to the facts of anæsthesia and analgesia as recited by Bramwell at pages 360-361. Compare also his Index, under "Analgesia, in hypnosis, and post-hypnotic."

Perhaps the most marvellous of all these "supernormal" attainments is the power of suffering one's body to be buried for a long time and of resuming one's normal activities on release from the grave. Well-attested cases are indeed rare, but such in fact there are, and none is better attested or more wonderful than that of Haridās.

¹⁷ At xii.197.7, cited by Hopkins, *Yoga-technique*, JAOS. xxii.344.

This man had himself buried alive for six weeks at Lahore at the Court of Runjeet Singh in 1837. Thorough-going precautions were taken against fraud, and the account of the matter is from the pen of Sir Claude Martin Wade, who was an actual eye-witness of the disinterment. The account was first printed by James Braid, in a tiny book,¹⁸ since become famous, entitled "Observations on trance or human hybernation," Edinburgh, 1850. The very title of Braid's sober and judicial treatise intimates that he sees nothing miraculous in this performance, but regards it rather as analogous to the hibernation common in many animals and as something that could be and was induced by natural, albeit most elaborate and painstaking, means. The case at any rate warns us against too ready incredulity concerning Hindu marvels that seem at first blush to pass the bounds of the possible.

To show the interest of studying Yoga in the light of the discoveries of modern psychology, I know of no better example than the story of Ruchi and Vipula. This is indubitably a case of hypnosis and effective suggestion to the hypnotized subject to refrain from yielding to a strong temptation to do a sinful act. If we knew nothing about the psychological facts involved, we Occidentals should certainly not recognize the true significance of the narrative, especially as its technical features are presented in a terminology which the facts alone can elucidate. Thus the gaining power over another's will by hypnotizing is called "entering the body of another" "as wind enters an empty space" — phrases of hopeless obscurity until we know in detail the nature of the facts intended. The story is given in the Mahā-bhārata (at

¹⁸ Braid was a surgeon of Manchester, England. The copy of his book that lay before me when I wrote this, was a gift "To the President of Harvard College with the author's compliments" in 1852. The little volume has since been transferred to the "Treasure Room." The account was reprinted by Garbe in *The Monist* for July, 1900, Chicago. See also Garbe in Westermann's *Monatshfte* for September, 1900; or W. Preyer's *Der Hypnotismus*, Berlin, 1882 (p. 46, translated from Braid); or Richard Schmidt, *Fakire*, p. 88.

xiii.40, 41), and it is to Hopkins that we owe the service of showing¹⁹ its meaning to Western scholars. The story itself is in brief as follows.

The sage Deva-çarman had a wife of great beauty named Ruchi. Even the gods were enamored of her, and in particular god Indra, whose illicit amours are notorious. Well aware of Indra's designs, the sage, before going away to perform a sacrifice, summons his pupil Vipula and bids him protect Ruchi and her virtue and especially as against the lustful Indra. Vipula, himself a man of the utmost integrity and virtue and self-control, agrees to do the bidding of his teacher, and asks him in what form Indra may be expected to appear. "In any one of many forms," answers Deva-çarman. "Indra may come wearing a diadem or a clout, as a Brahman or as an outcaste, as a parrot or as a lion, as an old man or as a young man, or indeed in the form of the wind-god. Therefore," he continues, "watch over her with diligence." And so he departs.

Vipula sagely reflects that, if the tempter can come in the form of the wind, a fence for the hermitage or a door for Ruchi's cottage would be of no avail. He resolves to protect her virtue "by the power of Yoga."²⁰ "I will enter her body by Yoga and in it I will abide, sunk in the deepest concentration (samāhita). If I keep myself free from the slightest trace of passion, I shall incur no guilt." Accordingly, he sits down by her, who is seated, and gazes steadily with his eyes into her eyes, and so that her gaze meets his, and fills her mind with longing for what is right, so that she is averse especially to any adul-

¹⁹ In his paper on Yoga-technique, already cited, *Journal of the Am. Oriental Society*, xxii.359. Compare his excellent comments upon the technical features of the story.

²⁰ In such a story as this, the phraseology of the original Sanskrit (at *Mahā-bhārata* xiii.40) is of moment. My phrases are accordingly intended to be correct reproductions. Note especially those enclosed within marks of quotation, and see stanzas 50-52 and 56-59 of the original, as numbered in the Bombay edition of 1888.

terous word or deed.²¹ “Vipula entered her body as the wind enters space, and remained there motionless, invisible. Then, making rigid the body of his teacher’s wife, he stayed there devoted to guarding her, and she was not aware of him.”

Indra, thinking “This is my chance,” comes now to the hermitage in the form of a man, young and very handsome, sees the body of Vipula seated and with staring eyes and motionless as a picture, and sees Ruchi also in all her loveliness. She, on seeing him and his superb beauty, *wanted* to rise and welcome him and ask him who he was. But under the influence of Vipula, she could not move a muscle. Indra makes known to her himself and his passion and the need of prompt assent. Vipula recognizes her danger from her looks, redoubles the force of his hypnotic suggestion, “and bound with Yoga-bonds all her faculties,” so that, although, in reply to Indra’s “Come, come,” she wanted to say “Yes,”—the words that actually escaped her were “Sir, what business hast thou to come here?” She was, the story adds, not without grave embarrassment at the incivility of her answer, “spoken under the control of another.” Indra now perceives “with his supernormal eye” that Vipula is “in Ruchi’s body like an image in a mirror,” and that his case is therefore hopeless, and trembles lest Vipula curse him. Vipula “quits the body of Ruchi” (that is, terminates the hypnosis), and, with unstinted rebukes to the crestfallen Indra, tells him to take himself off. — Deva-çarman returns and Vipula presents to him his wife unspoiled.

The facts relating to hypnotism were unknown to the Occident at the beginning of the last century. In 1841 James Braid independently discovered and observed and described many of the phenomena here concerned.

²¹ Such is, I take it, the significance of lakṣaṇam lakṣaṇenāiva, vadaṇam vadanena ca, at stanza 58.

Even the word *hypnotism*, as may be seen from Murray's Dictionary, is only about seventy-five years old, having been introduced with *hypnotize*, etc., into the English language by Braid himself in 1842. But in spite of the extreme modernity of the Occidental knowledge of the facts, and of the terminology in which they are recorded, there is already a large and rapidly growing literature upon the subject, and the elaborate treatise of John Milne Bramwell entitled "Hypnotism, its history, practice, and theory" (London, 1906) gives a bibliography of books and articles running into the hundreds. Nevertheless, the systematic treatises, those of Moll and Bramwell at least, do not even attempt to carry the history of hypnotism back beyond the times of Braid, Esdaile, Elliotson, and Mesmer — a statement which I make, not by way of carping, but rather by way of calling attention to an opportunity. Unless I err, the whole subject is commonly regarded in the Occident as very modern, a recent discovery, when in fact it has been well known and widely known in the Orient for over two thousand years.

The fruits of Yoga-practice are told, not only in systematic Sanskrit treatises on Yoga and in Buddhist books, but also incidentally, as I have said, in many epic or narrative texts. The exploitation of these texts by an Indianist who has already made a thorough study of modern psychology is sure to yield very striking results. In the second chapter of his work on hypnotism (page 109 of the new edition of A. E. Waite, London, 1899), Braid describes his technique for inducing hypnosis. What must our wonder be on finding that almost exactly fifteen centuries ago in the island of Ceylon there was written a book, Buddhaghosa's *Visuddhi-magga*, a large part of which is concerned with this very subject. With Buddhaghosa indeed it is self-hypnotization, but the technique of it is substantially the same as that of Braid

in all its essential features: the willingness on the part of the subject to submit himself, the comfortable position, the steady and slightly strained gaze, the fixed attention, the gentle monotonous sensory stimulations.—That important discoveries should be made by a people, and be made again centuries later and quite independently by another people,—this is one of the most astonishing facts of human history.

Envoy.—The foregoing paragraphs were written several years ago, just after I had spent months in trying to live up to my doubtless wildly misconceived notions of editorial fidelity. To forestall the perhaps yet harsher criticism of less friendly judges, I had tried to find every findable fault with Dr. Woods's Yoga-book before he sent it to the printer. Buddhaghosa wisely says that you must ever and always be on the lookout for the good points in others, not for their faults. Now that I come back to the book,—not as an editor, but rather as a human being,—I am simply amazed at the general impression which it makes upon me as the outcome of genuine enthusiasm and indomitable patience. All this and much more was needed to advance our scientific salients into the territory of the Hindu dialecticians. We may well imagine those jealous guardians of their sacred lore as saying to themselves of us, *ils ne passeront jamais!* But Dr. Woods's intellectual emplacements (metaphors, like the sleeves of blouses, must be in the fashion) were good, and his preliminary bombardments have been effective. The infantry assaults of a second edition, or of fresh troops of Indianists, are now in order.

What I greatly missed in his work — as I told him at the time — was a chapter, in addition to the discussions of his Introduction, which should somehow make clear to the Occidental mind what the relation is between such hairsplitting dialectic and the practical aim of this philo-

sophical system, to wit, Salvation or Release. True, my position is exactly that of the young man who was asked whether he could play the violin, and who answered that he didn't know, but that he could try. It is one thing to translate a text, or three texts, and it is quite another to interpret one of the great movements of the human mind to a generation of humanity transformed by the vicissitudes of two millenniums and the inexorable forces of a physical and intellectual environment as different as the East is from the West — and this last the reader may take either as the familiar biblical commonplace or as a literal simile. The wise men of the East, it is said, think that we know how to make a living and that they know how to live. And it was an Oriental who said, I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. I should like to have Professor Woods tell us wherein, according to the Yoga-view, the fulness of life consisteth.

It may be that my question is so wrongly put that I shall be adjudged an incompetent critic. But at any rate, Dr. Woods has made a large step in advance towards proving that I am wrong, or else towards answering me aright; and in either case I thank him heartily. Meantime he has published in the *Journal of our Oriental Society*, volume 34, *The Jewel's Lustre or Maṇi-prabhā*, and he has the *Yoga-vārttika* well in hand, if not practically ready for publication. Let us hope that he will not let the great power of such long-gathered momentum be dissipated by any avoidable delay.

The pervading gravity of tone of these Hindu philosophical discussions comports with their extreme difficulty, and is rarely relieved by a touch of humor, — unless it be when old Vāchaspati Miçra deigns to add to his Explanation of something less hard than the rest, the amusingly laconic observation, “Easy” (*su-gamam*: so at ii.43, 44). As who should laugh at us up his sleeve,

if he had any sleeve, for not knowing that much ourselves! And worse than the comments — *difficile per difficilius* — are the super-comments. Most of them, after they have been done into the clearest English, are still as tough as whitleather. But Professor Woods's book has often reminded me of the symphony-concerts in the old Drapers' Hall or Gewandhaus of my student days at Leipzig, and the staring legend on the cornice above the fiddles and trombones and viols,

RES SEVERA EST VERUM GAUDIUM.

Dr. Woods has not chosen one of the "soft snaps" of the Indian antiquity. Its further difficulties need not dismay him. And our dearly loved French brothers with whom he is now so zealously working, are showing us the supremely great lesson, that the first thing needed for substantial victory is the loftiest moral courage. Long, long ago Plutarch put that lesson in an unmatched phrase which has often sustained me,

ἀρχὴ γὰρ ὄντως τοῦ νικᾶν τὸ θαρρεῖν.

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